

From the Author
Dr. Brown

SOME

372

OBSERVATIONS

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UPON THE

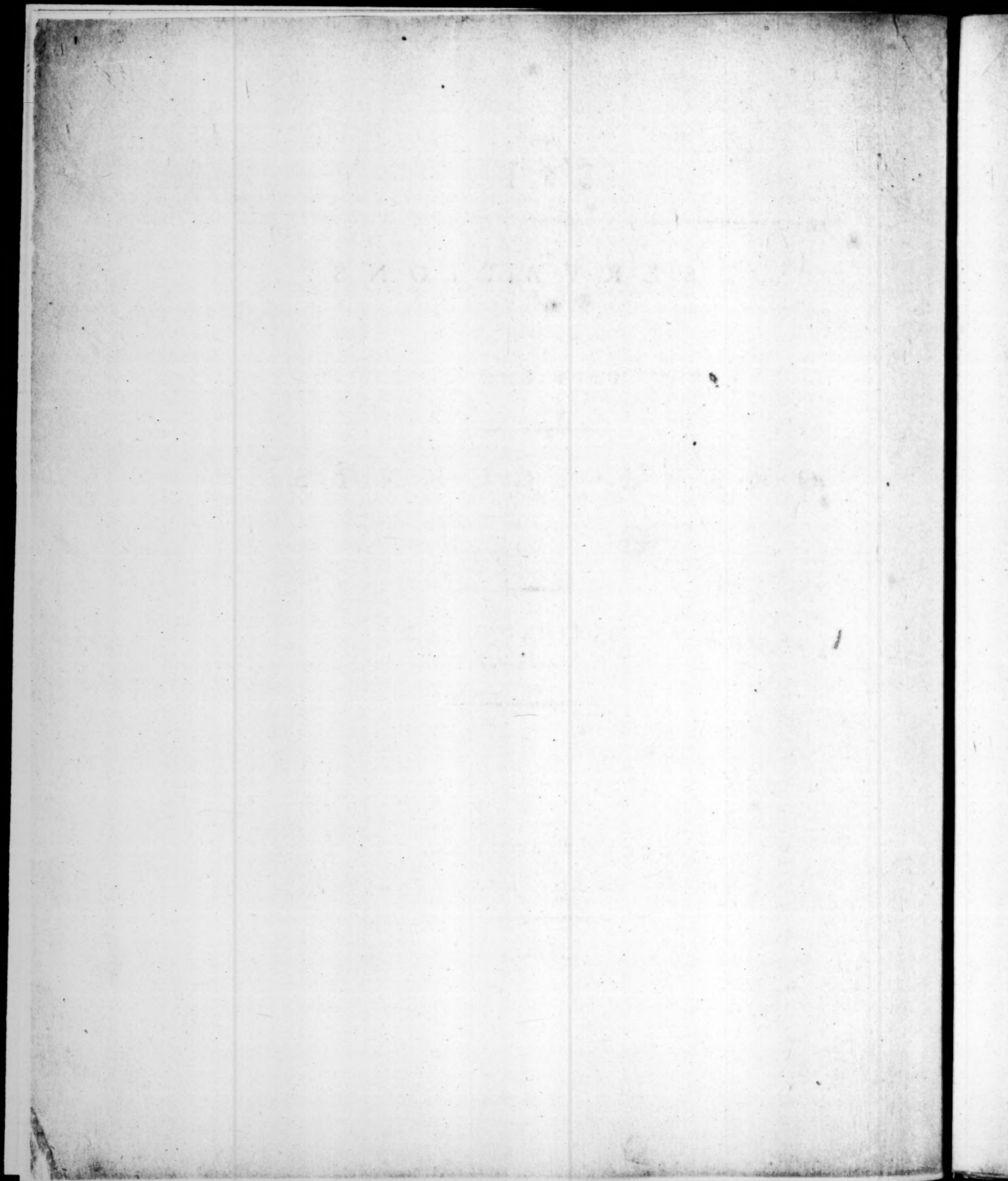
GREEK ACCENTS.

By ARTHUR BROWNE, Esq.
S. F. T. C. D. and M. R. I. A.

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D U B L I N:
GEORGE BONHAM,
PRINTER TO THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY.

1800,



SOME
OBSERVATIONS
UPON THE
GREEK ACCENTS.

HAVING lately had an opportunity of conversing with some modern Greeks, it appeared to me, that it might not be unacceptable to the Academy to communicate some observations which I made as to their mode of using and applying the accents, about the proper meaning and application of which so much controversy has arisen.

To make these observations intelligible, I must briefly recal to the recollection of the Academy some of the most celebrated opinions which have been urged concerning these accents, both as to their ancient existence and as to their use.

GRÆVIUS, Stevens, and Isaac Vossius in an express treatise on the subject endeavoured to prove them of modern invention, insisting that none are to be found in either inscriptions or manuscripts antecedently to the period of about 170 years before Christ. Hennin imagines that they were the invention of the Arabians
fo

so late as the eighth century, and were used only in poetry, and intended to ascertain the pronunciation of the Greeks, and to oppose the barbarism of nations who raised and depressed the tone of the voice according to the custom of their own language without any regard to the true quantity of syllables.* Wetstein, the learned professor of Basle, in his *Dissertatio de Accentuum Græcorum antiquitate & usu*, argues for the use of accents from the earliest days, and thinks that when the mode of writing was in capital letters equi-distant from each other, without distinction either of words or phrases, that accents noted by visible marks were absolutely necessary to distinguish ambiguous words, and to point out their proper meaning.

THE writers of the last century were no less divided as to the use of the accents than as to their antiquity; some insisting that they marked tones or intonation—the raising or lowering of the voice in pronouncing certain syllables of words; while others confound them with quantity, or at least asserted that quantity was influenced or affected by them.

THESE disputes have been revived with no small ardour in our own times. About 1754, a learned anonymous treatise appeared upon

* This seems absurd, because the accents do not accord with quantity, and therefore would so have set them wrong instead of right. No, the use of the accents must have been to prevent their pronouncing always according to the quantity of the syllable, and to shew them when the Greeks did not do so.

upon accents, denying their antiquity and supported by numerous arguments and quotations. About six years afterwards Mr. Foster's celebrated work appeared, striving to prove that they were only marks of intonation, and in 1764 was published the *Accentus Redivivi* of Mr. Primatt, asserting their antiquity, and admitting that they do affect metrical quantity, in so much, according to his opinion, as to be destructive of it.

FROM this last opinion it necessarily followed, in his opinion, and that of many others, that however it may be right to use them in prose, they are not calculated to regulate the recitation of verse; and hence the common dictum which is so often heard from the sons of Oxford and Cambridge, that we are to read by accent in prose and by quantity in verse.

ABOUT ten years since a small work appeared, but of great erudition, supposed, and now I believe not denied, to be written by a learned prelate of the English church, entitled *De Rhythmo Græcorum*; and at a much later period, a Treatise on the Prosodies of the Greek and Latin Languages, ascribed to another celebrated prelate on the English bench, and fraught with abundant learning, and intimate knowledge of Greek literature. In the first work I would only at present refer the reader to the fifth chapter, where the author oppugns the opinion *aliam esse in soluta oratione scanfionem rhythmicam, aliam in metris*, in opposition to

B

Faber,

Bp. Cleaver.

Horsley?

Faber, Dacier, Pearce, Clarke and others; but from the latter it is necessary to quote an observation or two to prepare us for an application of the facts hereafter to be mentioned. The very learned author, after contending for the antiquity of the accents, totally condemns the rule which has been mentioned, that we are to read by accent in prose and quantity in verse, *observing truly, that it is not very probable that any people should have had two pronunciations essentially different, one for prose, and another for verse.* He equally condemns the position that prose as well as verse in Greek must be read by quantity, that is, as he says, by the Latin accent, and thinking that the Greek accentual marks express the true speaking tones of the language, proposes rules of recitation on the bold supposition that tone was not always laid on *connected* words, where the accentual marks appear; whose position however was not changed, to prevent the confusion which would follow from making the position of the written mark different in connected, from what it is in isolated words: and he justly censures the printing of books unaccented, one of which, an edition of Theocritus, had escaped from the Clarendon press. He holds that though in placing accent, regard is had to quantity*, *euphoniæ gratia*, and though it therefore may be a symptom of quantity, it is never a cause of

* For, says he, the general sound of the word will be more or less agreeable, according as syllables at certain distances from the seat of the acute accent are long or short. Hence, if accent were placed without any regard to quantity, it would often seduce the speaker into a violation of quantity, for the sake of the general euphony of the word.

of it, and never creates it; and he calls the opinion of Mr. Primatt and others, that the acute accent lengthens the tone of the syllable on which it falls, a common prejudice. But he doth not deny that accent will often be at war with quantity, unless transposed in the manner by him recommended. Thus in the line

Μῆνιν αἶεϊδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆϊ,

the word, *Ἀχιλῆϊ*, must be pronounced *Ἀχιλῆϊ*.

ALTHOUGH I never could assent to a position so strongly contradictory to the testimony of my ear as that of the acute accent not lengthening the syllable upon which it falls; and although my mind was much impressed with a saying of Mr. Primatt, that it is one of the extraordinary powers of the acute accent, even to change the real quantity, and with his assertion, that the opinion of Messieur de Port Royal, that the accent only raises the voice but gives no duration in pronouncing, is false; I found myself disposed to acquiesce in the sentiment that the accents denoted only tone, or elevation and depression of the voice: and this theory seemed to complete the perfection of the Greek language, apparently aiming at more accuracy, and greater freedom from ambiguity than any other language ever did; as to the time of an action by the variety of its tenses, as to the number of agents by its addition of the dual, as to the object of the act by its three voices, as to the varying pronunciation of its tribes by its analysis of the dialects, and as to the distinction of words written and spelt in the same manner, by its accents. We know that some nations, particularly the Chinese, have so used the accents. They have, say

the missionaries, but about three hundred and fifty words in their language.* Confusion is avoided by the accents, though these are not easily distinguished by an European ear; we knew that this must sometimes have been the case in Greece, as in the instances of *Ανὰ* & *Διὰ*. The illustration from our national and provincial accents is obvious †.

It occurred to me, however, that it was very surprising that no author on the subject seemed to have taken the pains to enquire what was the pronunciation of the modern Greeks, or their mode of using the accents: is it that no inference can be drawn from their usage, as to that of the ancients? this is easily said, but it has not been said by any of these writers. The argument from the Italian pronunciation of Latin giving us no insight into that of the Romans, doth not apply; for the incursions of barbarous swarms, like successive overflowings of the ocean, have washed away every trace of connection between the ancient and modern inhabitants of Italy, and perhaps there are more descendants of the Romans to be found in

* Others say twelve hundred, and that the nouns are only three hundred and twenty-six—all monosyllables. From the combination of these all their compounds arise. The Greek language has but about three hundred radicals. The Greeks, it has been said, had but two accents; the acute never rising above a fifth higher than the grave, though it might less: the Chinese many, with intervals much smaller, and more exactly marked and limited.

† E. G. a vulgar Scotchman would say whence ^{cāme} you, how ^{dó} you: a common Irishman, whence ^{yóu} came, how do ^{yóu} —and an English farmer perhaps would say whence ^{cāme} you. The first puts the acute accent on the middle word, the second on the last, and the drawl of the English farmer is marked by the circumflex.

in other countries, for instance, in Spain, than in Italy itself. Certainly the Spanish language has more obvious affinity to the Latin than the Italian has. But the history of Greece has been far different. Twelve hundred years have elapsed since the Western or Latin empire was overturned, but we must remember that the Eastern or Greek empire existed till about 300 years since, and down as late as the reign of Henry VII; and the Grecian people has not been exterminated, but remained ever since, using its own religion and language, though in subjection to the Turkish yoke. It is the same people, as much as the Welch are since they were conquered by Edward the First, and I do not see why their mode of pronunciation should be more altered. Twelve hundred years have elapsed since Latin was a living language, but Greek is a living language to this day. I speak from my own knowledge when I say, that the prayer books used by the Greek sailors, the only description of men of that nation whom we can expect to see here, are in ancient Greek,—they are able to read the ancient Greek authors, though from want of education not able to translate them fluently, and their letters written in modern Greek are easily to be understood by us, and differ from ancient Greek, allowing for the ignorance and uncouth stile of a mariner, little more than one ancient dialect did from another. I shall produce one to the Academy, now in my possession.

IMPRESSED with these sentiments I felt myself interested, when I heard that a Grecian ship, whose seizure has since been the occasion of a remarkable suit in the Court of Admiralty, and of the consequent detention of the seamen for a considerable

derable time, had been driven by stress of weather into the port of Dingle in this kingdom. This ship, called *La Madona del Caso San Speridione*, Captain Demetrio Antonio Polo, belonged to Patras, a town situated not far from the ancient Corinth. The business of their suit brought the captain and several of the crew to Dublin, and was the occasion of their remaining in this metropolis for a considerable time. I took the opportunity of frequently conversing with them, and though their want of erudition and information might seem an argument against drawing any inference from their practice, to me it appeared the contrary, because it gave me the unprejudiced and unpremeditated modes of pronunciation of persons who could not understand or know the reasons of my enquiries, or purport of my observations. The result was, to my great surprise, that the practice of the modern Greeks is different from any of the theories contained in the books I have mentioned: it is true they have not two pronunciations for prose and for verse, and in both they read by accent, and so far confirm the theory of the learned bishop, the latest writer I have mentioned; But they make accent the cause of quantity; they make it govern and control quantity; they make the syllable long on which the acute accent falls, and they allow the acute accent to change the real quantity: in these latter respects therefore they agree with Mr. Primatt, but they desert him when he therefore concludes that poetry is not to be read by accent—they always reading poetry as well as prose by accent. Whether any inference can hence be drawn as to the pronunciation of the ancients, I must leave, after what I have premised

mised above, to men of more learning, but I think it at least so probable as to make it worth while to communicate to the Academy the instances which occurred in proof of this assertion more particularly. Of the two first persons whom I met, one, the steward of the ship, an inhabitant of the island of Cephalonia, had had a school education: he read Euripides and translated some easier passages without much difficulty. By a stay in this country of near two years he was able to speak English very tolerably, as could the captain and several of the crew, and almost all of them spoke Italian fluently. The companion however of the steward could speak only modern Greek, in which I could discover that he was giving a description of the distress in which the ship had been, and though not able to understand the context could plainly distinguish many words, such as δένδρα—ξύλον, and amongst the rest the sound of Ἀνθρώπος pronounced short; this awoke my curiosity, which was still more heightened when I observed that he said Ἀνθρώπων long, with the same attention to the alteration of the accent with the variety of case, which a boy would be taught to pay at a school in England*. Watching therefore more closely,

and

* It will not be supposed that this man knew the rule, si ultima sit longa, acuitur penultima, si brevis, antepenultima. I cannot avoid here lamenting the total inattention to the rules of accent in our schools in Ireland. Suppose it to be an useless part of learning, if custom in England has made it thought ornamental and necessary, the Irish scholar who is ignorant of it will be censured, however undeservedly. I have known men of high literary name in this country who did not know the meaning of the marks which distinguish enclitics, and gave to oxytones the very converse of their real meaning. An English scholar who publishes a Greek classic, could accent it without looking on an accented copy.

and asking the other to read some ancient Greek, I found that they both uniformly pronounced according to accent, without any attention to long or short syllables where accent came in the way; and on their departure, one of them having bade me good day, by saying *Καλημέρα*, to which I answered *Καλημέρα*, he with strong marks of reprobation set me right, and repeated *Καλημέρα*; and with like censure did the captain upon another occasion observe upon my saying *Socrātes* instead of *Socrātes*.

I now felt a vehement wish to know whether they made the distinction in this respect usually made between verse and prose, but from the little scholarship of the two men with whom I had conversed, from the ignorance of a third whom I afterwards met, (who however read Lucian with ease, though he did not seem ever to have heard of the book,) and on account of my imperfect mode of conversing with them all, I had little hopes of satisfaction on the point, nor was I clear that they perfectly knew the difference between verse and prose.

At length having met with the commander of the ship, and his clerk Athanasius *Κονομος*, and finding that the latter had been a schoolmaster in the Morea, and had here learnt to speak English fluently, I put the question to them in the presence of a very learned College friend, and at another time, to avoid any error,
with

with the aid of a gentleman who is perfectly master of the Italian language. Both the Greeks repeatedly assured us that verse as well as prose was read by accent, and not by quantity, and exemplified it by reading several lines of Homer, with whose name they seemed perfectly well acquainted.

I SHALL give an instance or two of their mode of reading:

Βῆ δ' αἰεὶν παρὰ Δῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης,

Τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς,

Ἐς δ' ἐρέτας ἐπιηδὺς ἀγείρομεν, ἐς δ' ἐκατόμβην

They made the *e* in αἰεὶν — προσέφη and ἐρέτας long.

But when they read

Κλυθὶ μὲν, Ἀρδύροτοζ', ὃς Χρύσην ἀμφιέεηκας,

They made the second syllable of the first word Κλυθι short, notwithstanding the acute accent: on my asking why, they desired me to look back on the circumflex on the first syllable, and said it thence necessarily followed, for it is impossible to pronounce the first syllable with the great length which the circumflex denotes, and not to shorten the second. The testimony of the schoolmaster might be vitiated, but what could be stronger than that of these ignorant mariners as to the vulgar common practice of modern Greece, and it is remarkable that this confirms the opinion of Bishop Horsley, that the tones of words in connection are not always the same with the tones of solitary words, though in those of more than one syllable the accentual marks do not change their position. I must here add that these men confirmed an observation of

our late revered and lamented President, that we are much mistaken in our idea of the supposed lofty sound of πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλασσης; that the Borderers on the coast of the Archipelago take their ideas from the gentle laving of the shore by a summer wave, and not from the roaring of a winter ocean, and they accordingly pronounced it Polyphlisveo Thalässes.

I OWN that the observations made by me on the pronunciation of these modern Greeks brought a perfectly new train of ideas into my mind. I propose them, with humility, for the consideration of the learned, but they have made a strong impression upon me, and approached, when compared with other admitted facts, nearly to conviction. In short, I am strongly inclined to believe, that what the famous treatise so often mentioned on the prosodies of the Greek and Latin languages mentions as the peculiarity of the English, that we always prolong the sound of the syllable on which the acute accent falls, is true, and has been true of every nation upon earth. We know it is true of the modern Italians—they read Latin in that respect just as we do, and say, Arma virūmq̃cē cānō, and, In nōvā fert animus, as much as we. And when we find the modern Greeks following the same practice, surely we have some cause to suppose that the ancients did the same. In the English language, indeed, quantity is not affected, because accent and quantity always agree.* Bishop Horsley endeavoured

* The great resemblance between the Persian and English languages, in many respects, has been observed by Sir W. Jones.—Here is another: I had the pleasure of hearing

endeavoured to prove that they did so in Greek, but this is on the bold supposition that the accent doth not fall where the mark is placed. The objection to this hypothesis, which seems to have been admitted by all writers, and considered as decisive by some as to prose, by all as to verse, is that such a mode of pronunciation or reading must destroy metre, or *Rhythmos*. From this position, however universal, or however it may have been taken for granted, I totally dissent. That it will oppose the metre or quantity I readily agree, but that it will destroy the *Rhythmos*, by which, whatever learned descriptions there may have been of its meaning, I understand nothing more than the melody or smooth flowing of the verses or their harmony if you please, if harmony be properly applied to successive and not synchroal sounds. On the contrary, nothing can be more disagreeable or unmelodious than the reading verse by quantity, or scanning of it, as it is vulgarly called. Let us try the line so often quoted—

Armă vîrûmqûe cănô, Trôjæ qui primûs âb ôris,
instead of Armă vîrûmqûe cănô, Trôjæ qûi primûs âb ôris,
or, In nôvâ, &c.

No man ever defined *Rhuthmos* better than Plato, *ordinem quendam qui in motibus cernitur*; the motion or measure of the

C 2

verse

hearing a native of Lucknow, but born of Persian parents, who was lately in Dublin, Abu Talib Khan, read an ode of Hafiz; accent and quantity always went together: Bedéh Sakée meî Bakée, &c. &c.: with respect to the position of the accent, Sir W. Jones remarks, that the Persians, like the French, usually accent the last syllable of the word, and the *strength* of accent which he has noted was remarkable in the gentleman I have mentioned, and almost amounted to recitative.

verse may be exact, and yet the order, arrangement and disposition of the letters and syllables, such as to be grating and unmelodious to the ear. In like manner the feet of the verse may be exact, but the stress laid upon particular syllables of it which follows the quantity may totally destroy the melody: in short, the radical error seems to be the confusion of quantity with melody, and the supposition that whatever is at war with quantity and metre must be at war with melody.* I ardently agree with the praises of the author of the *Accentus Redivivi* on the Scholiastes ad *Hephæstionem*, that *Rhythmus trahit tempora ut vult, & sæpe breve tempus facit, ut sit longum*; on which the treatise *de Rhythmo Græcorum* observes, if this be true, *plane actum est de metris*. I admit it if they come in opposition to *Rhythmos* or melody. With respect to prose I think this is acknowledged, why not with respect to verse? That it is acknowledged with respect to prose, *Dacier* and *Pearce* argue from the famous passage of *Longinus*, where he says, that the passage of *Demosthenes* so famous for its pleasing sound, *τὸ τοῦ ψήφισμα*, consists entirely of dactyl rhythms. *Ψήφισμα* then as pronounced by him was a dactyl, not a dactyl measure, but a dactyl rhythm, and it is remarkable

* I speak with much hesitation, however, when I recollect, that a most revered and most beloved, and truly great man*, who honoured me with his friendship, and whose loss the world deplores, was of a totally different opinion, and once repeated to me, to oppose mine, with much emphasis, these lines of the third book of the *Odyssey*:

Ἡ ἑλὸς δ' αἰέμεσι, λιπὼν' ὠκυπάλῳ λήμῃσι,
 Οὐρανὸν ἱ: πολέχαλκοι, ἢ ἀθανάτοισι φαίην,
 Καὶ θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσιν ἐπὶ ζείδωροι ἄρμεναι.

* The late Primate.

markable that the modern Greeks pronounced it in the same way; how can it be otherwise if the acute accent be laid on the first syllable, *ψήφισμα*. There is a dactyl then in written metre, and a dactyl in pronunciation, and the same word shall when written, and when pronounced, be of different measure. Apply the same to verse. *ψήφισμα* is an Antibacchius for the purpose of the poet in measuring his verse, but it doth not follow that he may not pronounce it as a dactyl. I dare to say if Longinus had been speaking, not of the mode in which Demosthenes and all Grecians pronounced the word, but of the *pes* of the word, he would not have said it was a dactyl. The poet in constructing his verse must take the syllables as he finds them, and has no power to alter beyond a very little poetic license, for nude construction doth not admit of emphasis; but the speaker, or the writer are not so confined, and it was probably to mark their variations to the barbarous nations which overwhelmed Greece that accents were introduced, if they really were introduced at so late a period.

To illustrate what has been said, let any man try how easy it is to make a verse in perfect measure that shall be grating or unmusical to the ear, and another without measure, agreeable and musical. For instance, who can discover music in this line,

O Fortunati Mercatores, gravis annis,
or who would know it was poetry without being told so.

Colitur

Colitur Hybernia Divis virisque dilecta.

is a nonsense verse which has just occurred to my fancy, in quantity perfectly false, but in sound, perhaps, not unmusical; and this is the reason why the English have wisely and properly chosen to read Latin verse by accent and not by quantity, as I verily believe the old Romans did, because they could not bear the sound of the verse when otherwise pronounced; would the prosaic line before mentioned be improved by reading

O Fōr tūnā tī Mēr cātō rēs gravis annis, ?

THE French, though they apply the word accent differently from other nations, may, in my sense of the word, illustrate my meaning; the reason why the heroic verse of the French appears so intolerable to us, is, that we attempt to read it by quantity; it then comes out exactly like our twelve syllable verse, usually with us confined to ballads, and the famous verse of Corneille

Rome, l'objet unique de mon rassentiment.

dances on the ear exactly like

Ye belles and ye flirts, and ye pert little things.

But whoever visits the French theatre will perceive no such ridiculous saltation of measure, but a solemn and serious cadence governed by accent, adapted to the subject and to the scene, which almost prevents the auditors from perceiving that it is verse.

It will be here immediately said, that I confound accent with emphasis: I do not; I include in the idea inflection of voice, but
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in a secondary manner. No person can, in my humble opinion, lay a stress or emphasis on any syllable without making it long, nor is it ever made long (I will not say it is absolutely impossible, I speak of the fact) without either elevating or depressing the voice. Let any man try to express strongly the negative, *I cannot*, he will speak with an acute accent, elevate his voice, lay an emphasis, and prolong the syllable. I remember a celebrated member of a house of parliament, not long ago, remarkable for his circumflex on this very word. Mr. Primatt highly commends an author on the accents, who says, no elevation of the voice can be made sensible in pronouncing, whatever may be done in singing,* without some stress or pause, which is always able to make a short syllable long. I say, conversely, that no stress or pause is ever made without some elevation of the voice, either purely, i. e. in an acute tone, or mixed, that is, in an acute tone ending in a grave, and commonly called a circumflex.

It will be asked then what is the use of metre or measure in verse, if we are not to read by it; and here is the grand difficulty, and I own with candor I cannot answer it with perfect satisfaction to my own mind: to those indeed who say we are to read by accent in prose, it may be equally asked what is the use

* The treatise on the prosodies argues, that in music length of sound and acuteness of tone are not always united, and endeavours to confute Mr. Primatt, who attempts to account for this, without admitting that it can be so in speaking.

use of long or short syllables in prose, if we are not to attend to them when accent comes in the way: but to gentlemen on the other side, I can only answer, that in the first place accent doth not always interfere, and then quantity is our guide, and accent often accords with quantity. Secondly, metre determines the number of feet or measures in each verse, and thereby produces a general analogy and harmony through the whole, and it is to be observed, that, as I apprehend, accent doth not change the number of feet, though it doth the nature or species of them. Thus when we read

Arma virumque cerno, Trōjæ qui primus ab oris,
we do not make more feet than when we scan the line, nor employ more time than in pronouncing the next line in which the accent happens to accord with the quantity, viz. *Italiam fato profugus, Lavinaque venit*. Thirdly, The poet in measuring his verse certainly must be confined to some certain number and order of long and short syllables, in order to produce a concordance through the whole, and even to regulate the position of accent, which though not subdued by quantity will certainly have some relation to it, *euphoniæ gratia*; but surely the length or shortness of a syllable cannot determine where emphasis shall be placed—that must depend on the meaning and the thought; and it would be most absurd for the poet to say to the reader, you shall not rest upon this emphatic and significative word because its syllables are short, and wherever there is a rest, there must be length and intonation.

ON

ON the whole, then, I am inclined to conclude; not only that the ancient Greeks as well as the modern read both verse and prose by accent, which, indeed, the learned bishop before alluded to always insists, but also, which he denies, that they suffered the accents to control and alter the quantity; he does not indeed deny this, if the tones are given where the accentual marks are placed, but he denies that they were so given. Dacier, Pearce and Clarke admit that they read prose by accent, not by quantity. The learned prelates contend that they could not have had a different mode of reading prose and verse. I accept both propositions, though without admitting their inferences,* and the combination of those propositions proves my opinion, which however I do not advance dogmatically or decidedly, but with that feeling which I think becomes every member of this Academy, of wishing to advance useful or ornamental knowledge by free discussion and the suggestion of such ideas as seem to him worthy at least of the consideration of the literary world. In the idea that accent must affect quantity I have numerous supporters as well as opponents. I only differ from the former in thinking that verse must still be read by accent. I shall not trouble the society further but by the addition of a copy of a letter written by a Greek sailor belonging to the ship I have mentioned to the agent sent over here by the

D

Turkish

* Of the former that verse is not to be read by accent: of the latter, that though it is, its quantity is not thereby affected.

Turkish ambassador to watch the interest of the cargo, written in the present year, which the latter was so good as to give to me to shew the analogy between the modern and ancient language of Greece. It will be observed that this humble mariner uses the accents with as much attention as any scholar.

THIS letter so much resembles ancient Greek, that we might almost suppose it was so, and that the writer had at school acquired this faculty; but Mr. Barthold, to whom it was addressed, who perpetually conversed with the sailors in modern Greek, assured me that it was entirely modern, and that he could not have corresponded or conversed in ancient Greek. Mr. Barthold had resided a long time in Constantinople and in the Morea, and was perfectly well acquainted with the language of the modern Greeks. I never saw any book in modern Greek, but I know the New Testament in that language was published at Oxford in the present century, at the time when some modern Greeks were brought there for education, who, however, by their excessive idleness, disappointed expectation. But what supposition can be more strange than that a parcel of Greek sailors, or any one of them, should choose to correspond in ancient Greek. And I have the positive testimony of Barthold, that this letter is written in the common language of the country, and indeed he desired me to observe the words introduced from the Italian, such as *ton intereffon*; and if he had written it from his education at school, the terminations

nations and cases would not be so entirely foreign from the ancient. I cannot, therefore, doubt, especially when I compare it with the language I heard spoken by all the crew, and when I mention that I saw the log-book of the ship written in Greek which I could understand, that this is a specimen of modern Greek: the dates and days of the month in the log-book differed from the ancient Greek in the smallest circumstance only, thus the 18th of January was *Ιαννουαρις ογδοεκατη*, instead of *οκτο και δεκατη*, I have another of these letters in my possession much longer, with which I therefore have not troubled the Academy. I shall conclude with observing, that these modern Greeks always for accents used the word *Οξεα*, thereby confirming the opinion that there is properly no accent but the acute, the grave being the negative of accent; and we must remember that the word *προσωδια*, in the ancient Greek language, is the term used for accents: which word, when translated into Latin, is *accentus* or *ad cantus*, implying elevation of voice, or a kind of song, *superadded* or raised on the common tone of the voice, and cannot apply to the *grave*, which is negation of any departure from the usual level.

*Translation of the Greek Letter on the opposite Page: **

Cork, 1799, August 3d.

To the noble, rich merchant, Signior Barthold,
humbly, worshipingly, and lovingly.

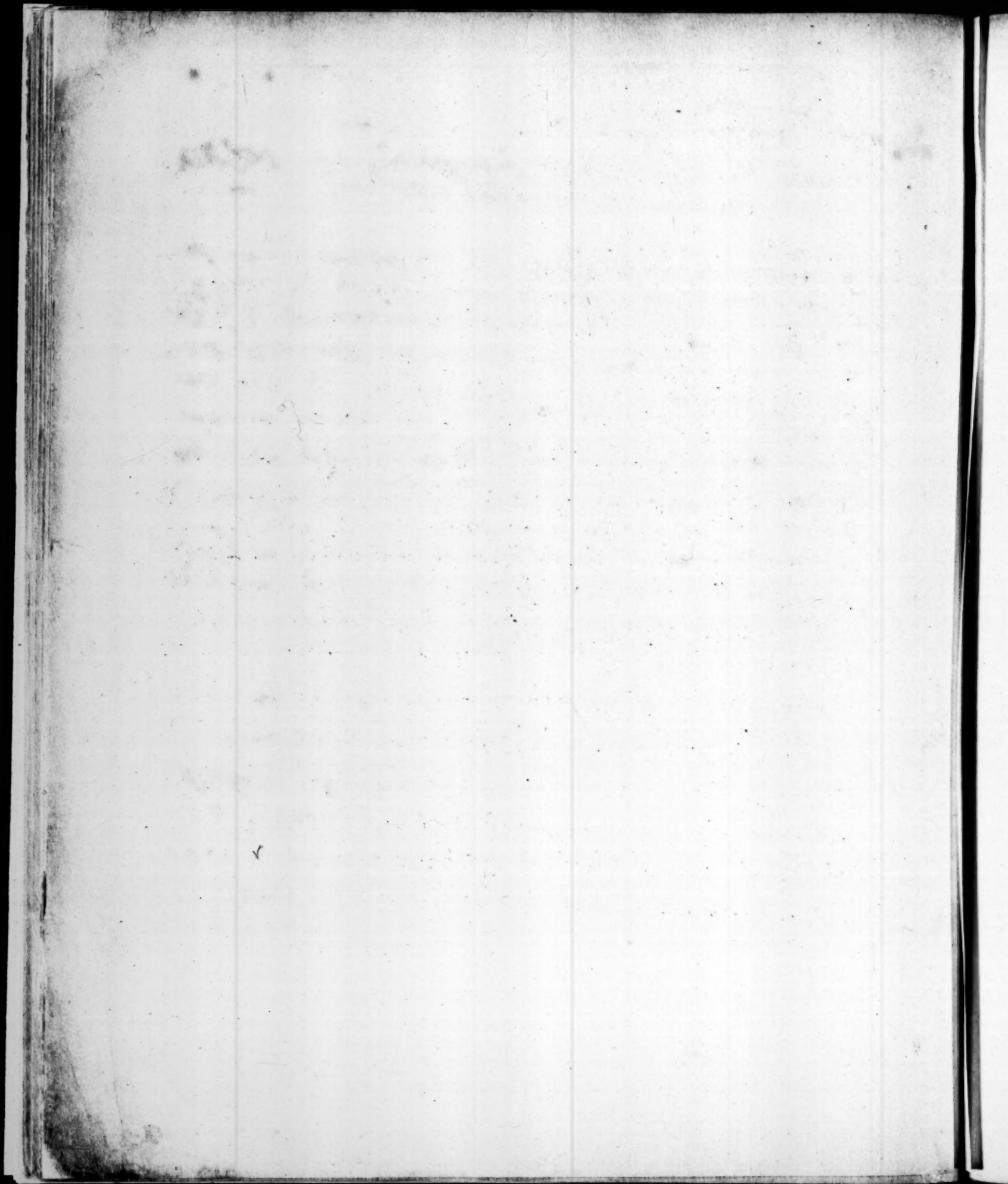
On the 17th of the last month I wrote to you a letter from Dingle, writing and exhorting you, that you would take care and better the interest of me destitute. That you might know how the other men grieved or held me, often signifying to me, where against me they spoke every day at their messs, that they would not have me; and I again appeased them, calling and crying out, and to me they gave ear. I exhort you, if you love God, and for the sake of your children, to write me a letter, as how you know of your generosity, that I may have and know how I shall conduct myself, and that I may convey the men to London, or may carry them to Dublin, and beg that I may have an answer how I shall conduct myself, and I shall as you may direct.

These, and I remain an outcast among the mountaineers,

Your servant,

CONSTANTINE ANDRIA.

* The opposite is a *Fac Simile* of the original.



To the foregoing essay, may without absolute impropriety be annexed the following observations by a very ingenious French gentleman, on an essay on Greek tenses by Dr. Browne, formerly inserted in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy :

Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, 1789, Vol. III.

Polite Literature.—‘ Brief Strictures on certain Observations of Lord Monboddo respecting the *Greek tenses*, by Arthur Browne, &c. &c. &c. pages 33 and 34.’

“ The probability that the Greek language might entertain
“ a distinct tense to denote what had lately or what had long
“ since happened, is augmented by our knowledge that they had
“ a tense to express what was soon to come. The nation that
“ used a *paulo post future* might have a *paulo ante preterit*. Some
“ circumstances respecting the French language may tend also to
“ illustrate and confirm the conjecture. They have * two pre-
“ terperfects,

* La Langue Française a quatre Parfaits. *J'aimai, J'ai aimé, J'eus aimé, J'ai eu aimé.*

Le premier marque une chose passée dans un tems dans le quel on n'est plus & dont il ne reste plus rien, & qui soit éloigné au moins d'un jour de celui où nous parlons : *J'écrivis hier, la semaine passée, le mois dernier, l'année dernière.* On ne diroit pas : *J'écrivis ce matin* parceque ce matin fait partie du jour où l'on est encore ; de même on ne dit pas *J'écrivis aujourd'hui, cette nuit, cette semaine, ce mois-ci,*
cette

“ terperfects, one of which is in fact an aorist. All their gram-
 “ marians say that this last is never used if the time be not en-
 “ tirely

cette année; on ne peut pas dire *nous vîmes* de grands evenemens dans ce siècle. Ce parfait est beaucoup employé dans la narration, dans le style historique.

Le second parfait marque une chose passée dans un tems qu'on ne désigne pas, ou dans un tems désigné qui n'est pas encore tout-à-fait écoulé: *j'ai écrit* à mon Frere. Je vous *ai écrit* aujourd'hui, cette semaine, &c. Dans bien des occasions on peut employer indifféremment ce second parfait au lieu du premier pour un tems passé dont il ne reste plus rien; on peut dire Alexandre *a été* ou *fut* le plus grand Capitaine de son siècle; mais le premier parfait ne s'emploie jamais qu'en parlant d'un tems absolument passé, ou ne s'en sert jamais au lieu du second parfait. Les deux autres parfaits répondent à ces deux premiers: le troisième répond au premier, & le quatrième au second.

Le troisième parfait exprime une chose passée avant une autre dans un tems dont il ne reste plus rien: quand J'EUS FINI mes affaires, *je m'en allai*. J'EUS hier au soir ACHEVE' mes lettres avant sept heures.

Le quatrième parfait exprime une chose passée avant une autre dans un tems qui n'est pas encore tout-à-fait écoulé, comme dans le même jour qu'on parle &c.: quand J'AI EU ACHEVE' ma lettre, *je m'en suis allé*. Il *a quitté* la compagnie des qu'IL A EU DINE'. Ce quatrième parfait est moins en usage que les autres, ou y supplée en se servant du mot *après* avec le parfait de l'infinitif: *après avoir achevé* ma lettre, je m'en suis allé. Il y a cependant des occasions où il est nécessaire d'employer ce quatrième parfait pour rendre précisément l'idée qu'on veut exprimer. Il *a quitté* la compagnie *après avoir diné*, ne dit pas la même chose que, il *a quitté* la compagnie DE'S QU'IL A EU DINE'. Le premier parfait *je dinai*, n'exprime précisément que l'action dans un tems passé, mais quand on dit, J'EUS bientôt DINE', J'AI EU bientôt DINE'; ces parfaits marquent l'action comme faite & consommée. Les verbes auxiliaires *avoir* & *être*, & les verbes *réflexifs* & *reciproques*, que quelques Grammairiens appellent verbes *pronominaux*, parce qu'ils se conjuguent avec deux pronoms de la même personne, n'ont pas ce quatrième parfait qui est un des tems que les Gram-
 mairiens

“ tirely past; for instance, il a été heureux cette semaine, ce
 “ mois-ci, cette année.” “ He was happy this week, this month,
 “ this year;” not “ il fut heureux,” though that expression
 would be applied to the happiness of the last week, “ il fut heu-
 “ reux la semaine passée.” So they observe it is never used to
 express an action done the day we speak in, but one done always
 at some small distance of time; for instance, they do not say, to
 express the happiness of this morning, “ Je fus heureux ce matin,”
 but “ J’ai été heureux ce matin.” This is mentioned only to shew
 that distinctions of this nature are not chimerical, and do exist
 in languages.

mairiens appellent *surcomposés*, parce qu’ils empruntent les tems composés du verbe
 auxiliaire *avoir*. Il y a encore d’autres exemples de pareils tems surcomposés dans
 la conjugaison des verbes Français.—(Voyez les grammaires de *Reflant* & de
Wailly.)

